



Safer Communities Partnership Board

1 March 2024

Title	Family Services Report on Victim Hub and Restorative Justice
Report of	Chair of the Safer Communities Partnership Board
Wards	All
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Key	No
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Summary	
This report provides an overview to the Safer Communities Partnership Board on the work being undertaken to support victims of crime and the development of restorative approaches.	

Officers Recommendations

For the Safer Communities Partnership to note the progress made against delivery of the Victim Care Hub and Restorative Justice projects and actions planned for Year 3 of programme delivery 2024/25.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

1.1 To provide the Safer Communities Partnership Board (SCPB) with an overview of developments and progress of work being undertaken to support victims and develop restorative justice approaches.

2. BACKGROUND CONTEXT

2.1 The Victim and Prisoners Bill (2023) makes provision about victims of criminal conduct and other affected by criminal conduct, the appointment and function of advocates for victims of major incidents, the release of prisoners, the membership and functions of the Parole Board and the prohibition of certain prisoners forming a marriage or civil partnership; and for connected purposes. The Bill is at committee stage following a 2nd Reading in the House of Lords.

2.2 The Victim and Prisoners Bill sets out the meaning of “victim” in Part 1 as: -

- (1) A person who has suffered harm as a direct result of—
 - (a) being subjected to criminal conduct, or
 - (b) one or more of the circumstances mentioned below in (2).

- (2) The circumstances are—
 - (a) where the person has seen, heard, or otherwise directly experienced the effects of, criminal conduct at the time the conduct occurred;
 - (b) where the person’s birth was the direct result of criminal conduct;
 - (c) where the death of a close family member of the person was the direct result of criminal conduct;
 - (d) where the person is a child who is a victim of domestic abuse which constitutes criminal conduct (in accordance with Part 1 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021).

2.3 The Code of Practice for Victims of Crime in England and Wales (Victims' Code), updated 16 January 2024, provides statutory guidance the services and a minimum standard for these services that must be provided to victims of crime by organisations (service providers) in England and Wales.

2.4 Victims’ Rights are summarised below:

- **To be able to understand and to be understood:** The right to be given information in a way that is easy to understand and to be supported to help understanding i.e. interpreting and translation services.
- **To have the details of the crime recorded without unjustified delay:** The right to have the details of the crime recorded by police as soon as possible after the incident. The right to be provided with additional support to assist in providing a witness statement or interview as required.
- **To be provided with information when reporting the crime:** The right to receive written confirmation when reporting a crime and to be provided with information about the criminal justice process, local programmes, and services for victims, including Restorative Justice (where you can meet with the suspect or offender).
- **To be referred to services that support victims and have services and support tailored to your needs:** The right to be referred to services that support victims, which includes the right to contact them directly and have your needs assessed so services can be tailored to meet them, the right to be offered a referral to specialist support services and be told about additional support available in court i.e. special measures.
- **To be provided with information about compensation:** where eligible, the right to be told about how to claim compensation for any loss, damage, or injury cases as a result of crime.

- **To be provided with information about the investigation and prosecution:** The right to be provided with updates, to be told when important decisions are made and the right, at certain stages of the justice process, to ask for decisions to be looked at again by the relevant service provider.
- **To make a Victim Personal Statement:** The right to be given information and make a statement which tells the court how the crime has affected the victim which is considered when sentencing the offender.
- **To be given information about the trial, trial process and role as a witness:** The right to be told the time, date, location, and outcome any court hearing and the right to be offered appropriate help before the trial, and where possible/where the court allows, to meet with the prosecutor before giving evidence.
- **To be given information about the outcome of the case and any appeals:** The right to be told the outcome of the case and, if the defendant is convicted, to be given an explanation of the sentence. If the offender appeals against their conviction or sentence, you have the right to be told about the appeal and its outcome.
- **To be paid expenses and have property returned:** The right to claim certain expenses if required to attend court and give evidence and to have property taken as evidence returned to you as soon as possible.
- **To be given information about the offender following a conviction:** The right to be automatically referred to the Victim Contact Scheme, where eligible, which provides information about the offender and their progress in prison, and if/when they become eligible for parole or release. The right to make a new Victim Personal Statement on how the crime continues to affect the victim.
- **To make a complaint about these rights not being met:** The right to complain to the relevant service provider, and the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman where a complaint is not resolved.

2.5 The Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Partnership Delivery Group

- 2.5.1 The Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Partnership Delivery Group is a subgroup to the Barnet Safer Communities Partnership Board (SCPB) which brings together partner organisations in the borough to work together with the aim of preventing Domestic Abuse and VAWG and reduce the harm it causes to victims, their families, and the wider community.
- 2.5.2 The Government's Supporting Male Victims Position Statement (updated August 2022) considers the challenges faced by male victims of domestic abuse in reporting abuse and accessing support. The position statement sits alongside the Government's Tackling VAWG Strategy (2021) and Domestic Abuse Action Plan (2022).
- 2.5.3 Barnet's Domestic Abuse (DA) and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy 2022-25 sets out the ambitions of the VAWG Partnership Delivery Group, as a sub-group to the Safer Communities Partnership, to prevent DA and VAWG and reduce the harm it causes to all victims, including children and male victims, their families, and the wider community.
- 2.5.4 Objective 2 of the DA and VAWG Strategy aims to 'support victims and survivors of domestic abuse and violence against women and girls to access help and recover'. Support is crucial to help all victims and survivors who have escaped from domestic abuse, in particular support for their health, trauma recovery, economic, housing, and social needs. Barnet Family Services

commissions Solace Women's Aid to deliver Advocacy and Support Services and two women's refuges. The services are monitored quarterly through the provision of data, feedback, and case studies and progress against the aims of the Domestic Abuse and VAWG Strategy is regularly reported to the Safer Communities Partnership Board and reported annually to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee for Crime and Disorder.

- 2.5.5 The Restorative Justice Council supports the right for victims of domestic abuse to have the option of Restorative Justice interventions. It is recognised that due to vulnerabilities of many survivors, there is a need for robust risk assessment to ensure the victim's safety is paramount; survivors must be in control of the process and, it must have no impact on the perpetrator's criminal sanctions (Restorative Justice Council, 2016). Calm Mediation have facilitators who are trained to deliver interventions, and restorative circle processes are in the very early stages of development. The engagement of individuals who are indirect victims i.e. adult family members, could be a useful first step in engaging with perpetrators and exploring opportunities to improve interaction with Police at the point of contact.
- 2.5.6 This report to the Safer Communities Partnership, details the work of Victim Care Hub and Restorative Justice Coordinator.

3. Victim Care Hub

- 3.1 Barnet Family Services developed a Victim Coordinator role with London Crime Prevention Funding (LCPF) to strengthen the support for direct and indirect victims of violent offending and to plug the gap created by the cessation of the Young Persons Victim Support Service in March 2022. The service supports the aims of the [Code of Practice for Victims of Crime in England and Wales \(Victims' Code\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) and is funded until March 2025.
- 3.2 The Barnet Victim Care Hub (BVCH) is established although turnover for the Victim Hub Coordinator role has been higher than expected over the past two years with the third Victim Hub Coordinator taking up post in January 2024. To ensure targets were met during periods of coordinator changes, priority has been given ensuring victims of crime needs are met through the creation of care plans.
- 3.3 Barnet's Victim Care Hub (BVCH) provides support for victims of reported and unreported crime, providing them with information on the rights and services available to them, based on their individual needs following an incident. The Victim Hub has three outcomes which it aims to achieve:
- To improve victim satisfaction and feelings of safety across the borough.
 - To ensure victims receive better support from the Police and CJS including in online interaction.
 - Increase of the use of the Victims Code of Practice which seeks to ensure that all victims: are treated with respect, dignity, sensitivity, compassion, and courtesy; make informed choices; have their privacy respected by service providers and have access to additional services to assist with understanding and engaging with the criminal justice process.

3.4 To achieve these outcomes, the BVCH:

- conduct assessments of referrals, including where necessary, further engagement with referring professionals or service-providers;
- formulate holistic and bespoke **Victim Hub Care Plan** for the victim (direct and indirect);
- provide information and local signposting options of support services available; and
- provide safety planning advice and resources, including personal safety alarms.

3.5 Local councillors have been provided with information about the BVCH so that residents can be supported from point of contact. The BVCH is accessible to all residents of Barnet who have experienced or witnessed a crime, even if that crime has taken place outside of the borough. Services are also available for non-Barnet residents, if the incident has taken place within the borough. Referrals can be made by professionals, partner organisations and community service providers by email to barnetvictimcarehub@barnet.gov.uk .

3.6 Individual **Victim Hub Care Plans** include information, advice, and guidance on:

- Trauma therapy, including online services and helplines.
- Housing support
- Restorative Justice
- Signposting to local support services, including:
 - mental health services in the community
 - learning disability and autism service providers
 - LGBTQ support services
 - racist and religious hate crime support.
- Guidance on personal/community/public safety.
- Peer mentoring
- Food Banks
- Financial Support Funds

3.7 The BVCH works in partnership with local voluntary and community services to provide victims with a bespoke support package which recognises and addresses their needs as a victim of crime.

3.8 The service has continued to be promoted through attendance of the Tackling Violence and Exploitation Team at multi-agency risk management panels and Serious Incident Response Meetings (SIRMS) in which awareness is raised of victim services. Whilst engagement with key stakeholders has been limited to the start of the quarter, this has not hindered the volume of referrals showing the positive impact of awareness raising.

3.9 The project has three performance outcomes which are reported to MOPAC (Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime) quarterly.

Outcome	Target	Outputs
Outcome 1	To improve victim satisfaction and feelings of safety across the borough Baseline: 64% pan London (2020/21) Target: Increase of 10-15%	1. Access to multi agency services at Victim Hubs 2. Signposting referrals to the MOPAC (Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime) Supporting Victims service.
Outcome 2	Victims receive better support from the police and criminal justice system, including online interaction: Baseline: The proportion of offence that were closed as a result of evidential difficulties and victims not supporting action increased from 35-40% (Crime Outcomes 2020/21) Target: Barnet will work to reduce cases spacing closed due to evidential difficulties by 10%	3. Access to Restorative Justice 4. Better Support recovery plan shared with Barnet Council (optional) 5. Engage 8 individuals per month
Outcome 3 (optional)	Increase of the use of the Victims Code of Practice revised 2021 Baseline: 20% of victims had heard of the Victims Code of Practice or received any rights (ONS) Target: An increase of 10-15%	

3.10 There have been 64 referrals to the Victim Care Hub since April 2023, which is 8 referrals below the intended target of 72 in the period Q1 to Q3 2023/24.

3.11 18 referrals were made in Q1 2023/24, of which 100% of referred victims were provided with further information about the Victims Code of Practice and were informed of their rights. In Q2, there were 21 referrals of which 71% (n=15) were provided with further information, in this cohort, 29% of referrals were for indirect victims i.e. a child of a victim. In Q3, there were 25 referrals, of which 32% (n=8) were direct victims and provided with further information; 17 referrals were for indirect victims who were referred to crime prevention support.

3.12 The largest volume of referrals was received in Q3, the volume of referrals can be directly linked to Victim Coordinator activity and notably dips during periods of change in post holders.

3.13 The sources and volume of referrals in Q1 – Q3 2023/24 is set out below in Table 1. Family Services (Early Help, Children’s Social Care, Youth Justice, Tackling Violence & Exploitation and Onwards & Upwards) account for 69% of all referrals in the reporting period.

3.14 Table 1 Referral Source & Volume Q1-Q3 2023/24

Table 2 Crime Type & Volume

Referral Source	No.	Type of crime	No.
Family Services – Children’s Social Care	9	Knife crime	2
Tackling Violence & Exploitation Team (including Community Capacity Coordinator)	17	Fraud	1
Community Safety Team	5	Exploitation	6
Department of Work & Pensions	4	Other non-crime	2
YJS (Youth Justice Service)	3	ASB	8
Probation	3	DA	5
Barnet Mencap	2	Robbery	5
Family Services – Child & Family Early Help Services	8	Common Assault	2
Residents’ association	1	Rape and forced underage marriage	2
Onwards & Upwards	7	Threats	2
Barnet Homes	4	Hate Crime	2
Age UK	1	Crime Prevention	17
		Harassment	3
		GBH	5
		Criminal Damage	2
Total	64	Total	64

3.15 In Q3, the Community Capacity Coordinator role has been instrumental in supporting referrals to the Victim Care Hub. The role provides opportunities to explore the wider impact of crime on indirect victims and supports community engagement in crime prevention approaches which grass roots organisations have requested, this is reflected in the crime type reporting above in Table 2.

3.16 A number of referrals received in Q3 were from public facing professionals seeking support for their work in the community, including home visits, the advice has provided information about how professionals can support safety planning with residents.

3.17 Anti-social behaviour, assaults (including domestic abuse) and robbery are the highest crime types in the reporting period. Services provided to victims are set out below which includes a triage and needs and risk assessment which is undertaken for all referrals; information is provided on Victim Code of Practice, signposted to appropriate services, engaged in safety planning, and provided with personal and home security items to help recovery and feelings of safety.

3.18 The Community Safety Team and Domestic Abuse MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) are the only two services to have utilised the mediation support available through the Victim Care Hub to date. Probation Services, Barnet Homes, Barnet Mencap and Age UK have contacted the Hub for information and guidance to support victims of crime, this had led to a small number of referrals in Q3.

3.19 Table 3. Type of support identified.

VCOP Rights	Personal safety advice & security	Home safety advice & security	Emotional /trauma support	Signposting/Information provision	Onward referral
41	38	16	24	28	9

3.20 Table 4 below indicates that 66% of referred victims of crime (excluding crime prevention types) in the reporting period had reported the crime to the police, indicating a sound level of confidence and understanding but also a need for some further improvement; half of those who had reported to the police were reported to be assisting with the investigation. Contact with victims to ascertain information beyond signposting is not always successful which prohibits full reporting in this area.

3.21 Table 4. Number of victim incidents reported to police Q1 – Q3

Location of crime	Reported to police	Not reported to police	Assisting in investigation	Not assisting in investigation / not known
Barnet	31	4 (excludes 17 Crime Prevention)	16	10

3.22 Whilst most referrals are made by Family Services, most victims referred are adults, with an even gender split; wider demographic information is being collected to support a stronger

understanding of access to victim support services and the communities most affected by crime. It is acknowledged that males are less likely to seek support as a victim following a crime. More females were referred as victims of exploitation than males in Q3, this may be reflective of gender bias given the higher prevalence of males who are victims of criminal exploitation.

3.23 Many victims wish to maintain anonymity which can impact on collection of data; the service does not wish to impose collections that create further obstacles for victims to overcome.

3.24 The case study below demonstrates that the Victim Care Hub is supporting the development of care plans that explore the direct impact of harm but also wider contextual picture which acknowledges the intersectionality of need.

Case Study:

Mark is a disabled adult who was a victim of fraud in 2020; the offence was still under police investigation and Mark made an attempt on his life due to the financial repercussions of the fraud incident.

To support Mark, the Victim Care Hub triaged his needs and developed an outline care plan to be led by a key trusted adult aimed at reducing an overwhelming volume of 'helping professionals'. A referral was made to Adult MASH and the Victim Care Hub facilitated information sharing in regard to local resources including Action Fraud, Food Banks, Residents Support Fund, Barnet Wellbeing Hub, Inclusion Barnet, Staying Alive App, The Listening Place, The Sanctuary (Mind in Barnet), Samaritans, Shout, and London Victim and Witness Service.

Focus for Year 3 Delivery 2024/25.

3.25 The Victim Care Hub is funded until March 2025. Further opportunities for funding continuation may become available via MOPAC's London Crime Prevention Fund or other funding opportunities that will allow for continuation and further evolution of the service.

3.26 In Year 3, focus will be to:

- Continue raise awareness of Victims code of Practice and Victim Rights
- Develop prevention materials aimed at improving knowledge of services that support home and personal safety.
- Ensure robust integration with wider support services for children and adults joining mental health support, adult services, domestic abuse, exploitation and ASB pathways.
- Explore peer mentoring opportunities.
- Build on the partnership with Youth Justice Services well established Restorative Justice approaches.
- Contribute to the Early Help offer to local schools and colleges to raise awareness of the Hub to young people.
- Develop responses for anti-Semitic and Islamophobic hate crimes through engagement with community and faith groups.
- Proactive community engagement

- Promote communications on national awareness raising days i.e. Hate Crime, Disability, Racism
- Engage with local with local youth provisions to increase awareness of rights of young victims, support services and restorative practices.
- Tackle the use of 'victim blaming' language.

4. Restorative Justice

- 4.1 A Restorative Justice Coordinator (RJCo) post was established in December 2022, it is funded with three-year London Crime Prevention Funding 2022 – 2025. The aim of the post is to provide training in conflict resolution skills to schools and community-based providers and build a network of Restorative Justice Champions that can support a sustained and embedded approach to early conflict resolution across the borough.
- 4.2 Restorative Justice (RJ) interventions have a compelling evidence base for achieving good outcomes, in a survey conducted by Remedi Restorative Solutions (2021), 94% of victims of crime reported an increase in their feelings of safety following a RJ intervention, while in the Why Me? Valuing Victims Report (2020), over half of victims reported being better able to cope with aspects of life such as health and wellbeing following an intervention.
- 4.3 RJ interventions can be offered to perpetrators of crime regardless of the complexity or gravity of the offence (All-Party Parliamentary Group Inquiry into Restorative Practices 2021/22). A research paper published by Remedi Restorative Services (2021) shows that 98% of offenders taking part in RJ interventions reported an increase in their personal understanding of the harm caused by their offending behaviour and furthermore, 96% of offenders stated that participation directly increased their motivation to not reoffend.
- 4.4 Restorative Justice Approaches, including RJ Conferences with victims of crime are recognised as a powerful way of empowering victims to explain the personal impact of offending. These approaches are well-embedded in Barnet's Youth Justice Service and support children and young people who have committed to offences to acknowledge the impact of their offending, take responsibility, and make amends through mediation, restorative meetings, and apology letters. An example of Youth Justice Restorative Conferencing can be found [Sheldon's Story — Why Me? Restorative Justice \(why-me.org\)](#).
- 4.5 The Youth Justice Plan 2023-2025 has a focus on supporting victims through Restorative Thinking training aimed at strengthening victim awareness and improve victim safety supported by use of a RJ screening tool. The programme can be delivered 1:1 or in groups. The Youth Justice has a RJ worker within the team who works closely with Barnet Victim Care Hub and Restorative Justice Coordinator role.
- 4.6 The outcomes and targets for the Restorative Justice Programme are set out in the table below:

Outcome	Target	Outputs
Outcome 1	<p>Victims receive better support from the police and CJS (Criminal Justice System), including online interaction.</p> <p>Measure: Improvement in victim satisfaction, feeling of safety and/or emotional wellbeing.</p> <p>Baseline: Overall victim satisfaction currently at 61% for NW (Northwest) London (at commencement of project, Jan 2023).</p> <p>Target: An increase of 10-15% akin to Q1 2020/2021 data when it sat at 76%.</p>	<p>Q1 (2023) Data – MOPAC Dashboard <i>Victims are Better Supported</i></p> <p>Overall victim satisfaction for NW (Northwest) London Q1 recorded at: 66%. MPS Pan London: 64%</p>
Outcome 2	<p>Community safety partners respond to the crime and anti-social behaviour which most concerns Londoners. Better Criminal Justice response and outcomes for victims.</p> <p>Measure: Increase in victims being able to access Restorative Justice</p> <p>Baseline: Fewer than 10% of victims currently being offered RJ.</p> <p>Target: 25% of victims given the opportunity to access Restorative Justice</p>	<p>Q2 (2023) Data – MOPAC Dashboard <i>Victims are Better Supported</i></p> <p>Overall victim satisfaction for NW London Q2 recorded at: 63%. MPS Pan London: 64%</p>
Outcome 3 (optional)	<p>Increase of the use of the Code of Practice for Victims (revised 2021).</p> <p>Measure: Rights 3 and 4 of VCOP to be met through RJ</p> <p>Baseline: 20% of victims had heard of the Code of Practice for Victims or received any rights (ONS).</p> <p>Target: An increase of 10- 15%.</p>	

4.7 Satisfaction levels are recorded to monitor the satisfaction rate in the region when compared to London as a whole, rates of those with a disability and rates of ethnic groups. In Barnet satisfaction rates were recorded at 75% in Q2 2023/24 which is 11% higher than Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) pan London data. For those with a disability, the satisfaction rate is 8% lower than MPS rate and for those of a mixed or other ethnicity, the rate is 6% lower. Due to the way in which data is

captured and recorded (telephone/online) there is little opportunity for further analysis of the data. However, the Victim's Commissioner, Annual Survey, 2022, does highlight some of the challenges faced by victims in reporting crimes and their experience of the criminal justice system [2022 Victim Survey - Victims Commissioner](#).

4.8 In the 'follow-up' data there is a 6% increase in satisfaction to 48% from pre-project reporting. Since Q1 2023/24 there has been engagement with the RJ Coordinator and Barnet MPS to coordinate and deliver training, supporting strategic implementation and victim centred support.

4.9 The Metropolitan Police already use Restorative Justice approaches and locally this has been strengthened through partnership with Barnet Council which was formally established in the summer of 2023. The strategic collaboration has enabled officers to identify Restorative Justice opportunities for victims of crime, fulfilling the entitlements under the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime and meeting the aims of 'A New Met for London' by focusing on rebuilding trust with victims of crime and the communities of London. Barnet has been selected as the lead borough to explore the implementation of a robust Restorative Justice system that meets the needs of victims of crime by informing them of and supporting them through Restorative Justice referral processes. The RJ Coordinator has been training frontline officers, PCSOs and senior officers in RJ theory and practice approaches, supporting confidence, understanding of the process, referral pathways and benefits to victims.

4.10 **The Strategic Partnership with MPS has enabled:**

- The RJ Coordinator to host a meeting with Metropolitan Police RJ Lead (Inspector Coney) and senior officers from Barnet MPS.
- Discussions on identifying/flagging individuals/cases for RJ intervention using existing police reporting systems.
- Joint promotion of RJ via Barnet and MPS internal and external channels.
- RJ Week promotion on LB Barnet website used to promote partnership with MPS (November 2023).
- Further training requested for all Barnet Safer Neighbourhood Team and Police Community Support Officers (SNT/PCSO); **75** in total).
- Discussions on how to increase capacity for RJ interventions at Borough level to support anticipated higher volumes being referred to Calm Mediation (including the recruitment of volunteers with lived experience in the borough).
- Consultation with the RJ Coordinator to inform RJ approaches across the MPS, followed by a presentation to a meeting of 400+ of MPS senior officers.
- Meeting with British Transport Police to explore potential for shared working and improving access.
- Consultation on development of an RJ App which will be trialled with Barnet officers in Q4, allowing for prompt and efficient recording of RJ interventions at street level and expediate suitable, onward referrals to Pan London providers i.e. Calm Mediation.

4.11 Once embedded, greater consistency in the use of RJ approaches will be evident and support timely referrals of victims to Calm Mediation. The model adopted in Barnet will be used as a template for other London boroughs ensuring greater consistency in the fulfilment of victims' rights across the Capital.

- 4.12 Crimestoppers recognises that there are a number of barriers to reporting crime directly to the Police and the service seeks to provide residents with a safe and anonymous way of accessing Police intervention. A recent promotional campaign has been led by the Metropolitan Police to support reporting of crime anonymously and at any time via Crimestoppers. Crimestoppers is an independent charity working in collaboration with the Police to allow victims and witnesses of crime to report incidents confidentially by phone or online. After receiving a call or a completed anonymous online form, Crimestoppers creates a report that brings together all the information that has been provided and ensures that it does not contain any information that could identify the person reporting the offence. The report is sent to the relevant authority with the legal responsibility to investigate crimes, make arrests and charge people in order to bring them to justice.
- 4.13 Crimestoppers shares advice on how callers can protect themselves from crime and feel safer in the community. Residents can report online [Giving information anonymously | Crimestoppers \(crimestoppers-uk.org\)](https://www.crimestoppers-uk.org)
- 4.14 Over 2023/24 the RJ coordinator is providing bespoke training in restorative approaches to a range of school and community-based services to establish a RJ Network, led by RJ Champions with the aim of increasing capacity for schools and community-based services to facilitate restorative interventions whilst also creating opportunities for learning, collaboration, and the sharing of good practice.
- 4.15 Barnet continues to operate a network of third-party Hate Crime Reporting Centres where victims and witnesses of hate crime (in particular, Barnet's more vulnerable residents and adults-at-risk) can access support to report offences to the Police and be referred or signposted to local specialist organisations for ongoing support.
- 4.16 Barnet's Hate Crime Reporting Centres are selected to represent a diverse cross-section of the community and are in accessible locations across the borough. The Hate Crime Reporting Centres recognise intersectionality and that victims might have experienced more than one strand of hate crime or a combination of different crimes.
- 4.17 The Hate Crime Reporting Centres will therefore work closely with the Barnet Victim Care Hub to provide a wraparound service for victims of hate related crime, including safeguarding interventions, mental health and emotional support via trauma therapies, advice on personal and public safety and application of rights under the Victims Code and will expand to a diverse range of groups to ensure all victims of Hate Crime have access to support.
- 4.18 RJ is an effective, if underutilised, resource in the prevention of discrimination and resolution of harm following a hate crime. Preventative work enables facilitated discussions between members of a community (such as a school) with the aim of dispelling myths, raising awareness of practices and beliefs associated with a particular community and promoting tolerance and kindness. When a hate crime occurs, many people value the opportunity to speak to the perpetrator to challenge prejudices, educate offenders and tackle discrimination. Acceptance of wrongdoing by perpetrators and the active participation in the resolution of this harm can help reduce the chance of reoffending and provide closure for victims. ([About Why me? - Why me? Victims for Restorative Justice Restorative Justice \(why-me.org\)](https://www.why-me.org)) This understanding of the impact of hate crime is helping shape the training provision and awareness raising work being delivered by the RJ Co-ordinator.
- 4.19 **Raising awareness through training and networking:**

- School-based training has continued with bespoke sessions designed and delivered to existing schools involved in the project. Feedback from schools indicates that restorative approaches are beginning to move the culture from punitive to restorative and early indications are that this is having a positive impact on relationships at all levels. Feedback has been **100% positive** across all schools.
- 1:1 and group training delivered at Etz Chaim Jewish Primary School – Exploring conflict and simple restorative conferencing (14).
- Action planning at Claremont and Childs Hill Primary Schools (3).
- Action planning and whole school training at Trent Church of England Primary School, implementing circles, affective language, and conflict de-escalation (15).
- Implementation Team training - Friern Barnet Secondary School – Circles, affective language, conflict de-escalation, scenario training (3).
- Implementation leaders across all restorative schools been designated '*Restorative Practice Lead*' (RPL) and as such will contribute to the wider training and development of staff in their own schools and across the borough in the next phase of delivery.
- Police training was revised and redesigned during Q3 and a further **22** officers were trained, split into **2** cohorts. This brings the total number of Barnet officers trained to **42**.
- The design and development of training materials has led to the production of 90 slides and approximately 4 000 words contained in supporting material, worksheets, and companion guides. Feedback has been **100% positive** across all sessions.
- Attendance at the Barnet Together Conference in October provided an opportunity for networking and sharing of resources around RJ and BVCH. Feeds into 'raising awareness' narrative.

4.20 Progress Towards Meeting Outcome

- Victims informed of their right to RJ via electronic and telephone communication.
- 32% of victims of crime contacted by the BVCH are now informed of their rights under the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime. 68% of the referrals through to the BVCH were for crime prevention support and guidance and therefore did not require post -offence support via the Victims Code of Practice.
- 100% of victims of crime referred directly to RJ Co-ordinator are informed of Rights 3 and 4
- All electronic correspondence from RJ Co-ordinator contains a link to the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime.
- Explicit reference to VCOP made at network and training events reaching **60** direct contacts and other indirect contacts at the Barnet Together Conference.

4.21 The RJCo will also work with partners in the criminal justice system to open referral routes and access to RJ for victims of crime, thereby meeting the requirements of the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime (2021) by explicitly informing victims of crime of their right to RJ and, where possible, delivering a suitable RJ intervention directly or by onward referral to the RJ Network.

4.22 Barnet Council has obtained Restorative Justice Council (RJC) membership which will support risk and safety planning, provide access to advice and training, good practice, and information to the wide network of restorative communities. In the long term (Year 3 of delivery) the aim is to achieve accreditation as a Registered Restorative Organisation (RRO). Organisations can review

membership criteria and/or apply at [Restorative Justice Council | Promoting quality restorative practice for everyone](#)

- 4.23 In Q1 2023/24, 66% (n=12/18) referrals into BVCH had a Restorative Justice (RJ) follow up informing victims of their right to access RJ; all were given information about their rights under VCOP. This increased to 71% in Q2.
- 4.24 Restorative Approaches Training for Schools has commenced with 6 schools alongside 7 non-school training events that were held in Q1 2023/24 with voluntary sector providers, Unitas and Early Help settings; the training has reached over 150 participants. Feedback has been incredibly positive/
- 4.25 Restorative training has been delivered to 20 staff working in Barnet's residential children's home settings and follow up training has been requested to explore conflict de-escalation and Restorative Justice conferencing.
- 4.26 Fifteen Metropolitan Police Officers participated in the Restorative Justice refresher training course in Q2 2023/24. The course consisted of a bespoke package of activities designed around tuning into restorative dispositions, victim and perpetrator preparation, risk assessment and formal conferencing.

Good Practice:

- Good communication between YJS and the RJ Co-ordinator led to a joint approach with MO10 Prosecutions (Met Police) which supported team attendance at a network and training event in April 2023
- This led to a request for RJ refresher training for up to 50 Met Police officers, including those from Barnet.
- Intended outcome: a rise in the number of victims being informed of their right to RJ under VCOP
- Identification of named officers responsible for raising the profile of and ensuring the effective administration of RJ interventions in their BCU's.
- Stronger mechanisms for delivery and recording RJ interventions.

- 4.27 RJ coordinator hosted a successful Network Meeting with **45** attendees including police, youth settings and schools. The next Network Meeting is scheduled for Q3 in which schools will be invited to reflect and celebrate the early successes and recognised as *Restorative Champions*; their work will support the ambition to becoming a RJC Registered Restorative Organisation.
- 4.28 The RJ coordinator has completed 4 days of training at Essex Restorative and Mediation Service which is used to benchmark resources designed by the RJ coordinator and assess their suitability for submission to the Restorative Justice Council for accreditation. Accreditation is beneficial as it will raise the status of the Borough as an approved and verified RJ training provider.

4.29 Feedback from training has been positive, with all respondents agreeing that the training has improved confidence to explain RJ to a victim or perpetrator of crime, and to identify opportunities for RJ Interventions. Feedback from school reports:

“Have gained an insight into how Restorative Practice works and how it can benefit a school environment. It can be used to improve students’ behaviour and support staff in building/maintaining positive relationships with students. We have been given suggestions that we can build on and implement in our school”.

“There has been development of a shared affective language used across the school which is helping to support children when they are struggling to regulate. The idea of ramping up pro-social contact is drip feeding through to more and more staff – catch them doing the right thing and magnify it, normalise it and where possible ignore the negative behaviour”.

4.30 The RJ coordinator has taken the lead for chairing an anti-bullying group which supports the wider restorative approaches in schools and the aim of Barnet council becoming a registered restorative organisation. In Q3 there are plans to develop restorative pathways for victims of VAWG and for roll out of further training on restorative approaches.

4.31 The Restorative Justice Project Plan is set out below in Table 5.

Table 5. Restorative Justice Project Plan 2022- 2025

Project Area	Phase	Additional Information	Progress
Raise the profile of Restorative Practice	Year 1	Delivering training, attendance at variety of risk panels, working groups and networking events. Production of articles for internal and external press	In progress
Membership of RJC	Year 1	Membership acquired and active until 2026.	Completed
RP/J Training (Design and delivery)	Year 1 & 2	25 bespoke training packages designed and delivered in between Q2 & Q4 2023/24. Further delivery linked to emerging strategic priorities.	In progress
Quarterly Network Meetings	Year 1-3	3 hosted to date	In progress
Provide greater access to RJ for victims of crime	Year1-3	Linked to Barnet Victim Care Hub greater access is increasing with awareness raising and development of pathways for referral. Developed strategic partnership with Met Police Q1 2023/24. RJ awareness training developed and delivered to 75 Barnet-based officers is underway. Creating blueprint for Met-wide RJ roll out based on the Barnet Model	In Progress

Co-ordinate RJ via <i>existing</i> referral routes	Year 2	Commenced in Q4 2022/23 with the modification of Barnet Victim Care Hub resources to explicitly offer RJ signposting and via direct contact when appropriate. Appointment of new Victim Hub Co-ordinator will support completion of this aim in Year 3. Developing partnership with MPS means that <i>reported</i> crime is most likely to progress via their RJ pathway. Victims of unreported crime referred into BVCH will be offered access to RJ services. Press and literature to be designed to support this (including RJ Week 23/24).	On track
Establish network of RJ community providers	Year 2/3	Volunteer recruitment and MPS RJ to commence in Q2 2023/34	On track
Volunteer recruitment and training. (Emerging need)	Year 2	Supporting the expected increase in police RJ referrals and building links with the community. Feeds directly into delivery aims of A New Met for London.	
Training of Detached Workers (Emerging need)	Year 2	Emerging opportunity to raise awareness of and access to RJ via the newly appointed detached workers. Training to commence Q4 2024	
Establishment of <i>new</i> RJ referral routes	Year 2	Commenced in Q4 2022/24 alongside development of Barnet Victim Care Hub and RJ Coordinator role, pathways are on track for development with key agencies to access BVCH and CALM mediation. On-going Met Police work will see the establishment of a referral system in Barnet to enable frontline officers to connect VOC with Calm or BVCH (neighbour disputes for mediation) to explore RJ intervention.	On track
Accreditation RJC RRO	Year 3	Can only be achieved once organisation is operating restoratively within the 6 RJC identified parameters.	On track

8 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 To update the Safer Community Partnership Board regarding the progress made in relation to the London Crime Prevention 2022-25 Funded Projects 'Victim Care Hub' and 'Restorative Justice.

8.2 For the SCPB (Safer Communities Partnership Board) to recognise progress made against the ambitions of Victim Care Hub and Restorative Justice projects and the commitment of the local authority to meet the needs of victims of crime in the borough.

9 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

9.1 Not relevant in relation to this report.

10 POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

10.1 To deliver Year 3 of the Victim Care Hub and Restorative Justice Projects with the aim of building sustainability by widening the availability of victim focused and restorative approaches across the borough partnership.

11 IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

Corporate Priorities and Performance

Corporate Plan

11.1 The Barnet corporate plan puts Caring for People, our Places, and the Planet at the heart of everything we do, with a commitment to create places that are clean, safe, and welcoming.

11.2 Family Friendly is a key driver of our corporate planning with the vision of “Creating a Family Friendly Barnet, enabling opportunities for our children and young people to achieve their best.”

12 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

12.1 There are no current financial implications associated with the recommendations of this report.

13 Legal and Constitutional References

13.1 Under s.17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, it is a duty of the Council (and other partner agencies, including Police, Fire & Rescue, Greater London Authority, Transport for London) when exercising its functions to have due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder (including anti-social behaviour), misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances and re-offending.

13.2 The BSCP (Barnet's Safeguarding Children's Partnership) is a Community Safety Partnership set up in accordance with the requirement of the section 5 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 as amended by section 108 of the Policing and Crime Act 2009.

13.3 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 places a duty on local authorities in England to assess the need for accommodation-based support to victims of domestic abuse, prepare and publish a strategy for the provision of such support and monitor and evaluate its effectiveness. Prior to publishing a strategy, the local authority must consult the domestic abuse local partnership board and such other persons as the local authority considers appropriate.

13.4 The Victim's Bill 2023 makes provision for victims and others affected by criminal conduct; the Bill makes e appointment and functions of individuals to act as independent public advocates for victims of major incidents; about the release of prisoners; about the membership and functions of the Parole Board; to prohibit certain prisoners from forming a marriage or civil partnership; and for connected purposes.

13.5 Section 10 of the Offender Rehabilitation Act 2014 amended the Offender Management Act 2007, placing a duty on the Secretary of State for Justice to ensure that arrangements for supervision or rehabilitation identify specific need and so make appropriate provision for women and vulnerable groups.

14 Insight

n/a

15 Social Value

15.1 The cost of offending and reoffending is set out in the 2018 Home Office report on the Economic and Social Cost of Crime (2nd edition). The report followed a cohort of offenders identified in 2016 who subsequently went on to reoffend during the 12-month follow up. The total estimated economic and social cost of reoffending was £18.1 billion. In addition, there is a further personal, familial and community cost which impacts on the lives of individuals, children and families and the communities that they live in.

15.2 Crime harm refers to the negative impacts of crime on individuals and society. While crime is often seen as a harm in its own right, the negative impacts related to any one incident will differ by the type of crime experienced as well as the perspective of the victim. These harms include a wide range of outcomes for both individuals, such as financial loss and physical harm, and for communities and wider society, such as fear of crime and increased use of health and victim services. (The impact of crime on victims and society, National Office Statistics, March 2022)

16 Risk Management

16.1 Risk management varies according to the different initiatives. The partnership or appropriate agencies are made aware of risks and actions to mitigate the risk are agreed and put in place. There is always risk that the partnership may not achieve the targets set due to factors outside its direct control – however there is strong partnership working in place enabling agencies to identify and highlight risk and be open to addressing the risk collectively.

17 Equalities and Diversity

17.1 Decision makers should have due regard to the public sector equality duty in making their decisions. Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 sets out the public-sector equality duty to which the authority must have due regard.

17.2 Elected Members are to satisfy themselves that equality considerations are integrated into day-to-day business and that all proposals emerging from the business planning process have taken into consideration the impact, if any, on any protected group and what mitigating factors can be put in place. The equalities duties are continuing duties they are not duties to secure a particular outcome.

17.3 Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.
- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.
- Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

17.4 Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, the need to:

- Tackle prejudice, and
- Promote understanding.

17.5 Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act. The relevant protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race,
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil partnership

17.6 The commitment to the Public Sector Equality Duty is set out in the council's Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2021-2025 which aims to actively tackle inequalities, foster good relationships

across our communities and recognise the contributions that people from different backgrounds make to life in our borough. Violence and offending affect all communities and there well documented racial disproportionality in the criminal justice system for children and adults that must be addressed. The Domestic Abuse & Violence Against Women & Girls Strategy and action plans to reduce violence, recognises the intersectionality of protected characteristics, disadvantage, and discrimination. It is our aim for the borough to be a fair, inclusive and a safe place for all our communities. Where discrimination is tackled, hate crime is reported and dealt with promptly, and everyone feels safe to live their life.

18 Corporate Parenting

18.1 Many children who are cared for by the local authority have been exposed to domestic abuse prior to entry into care, as such are often young victims of the harms caused by domestic abuse in their parental relationships. Adverse childhood experiences can make children more vulnerable to domestic abuse, coercion, and control in relationships.

18.2 Children and young people in care and care experienced young people have a higher prevalence of adverse childhood experiences that may make them susceptible to grooming and coercion as such may be at an increased risk of becoming involved with the criminal justice system. Children who are victims of crime have a higher prevalence of perpetrating a later crime. The importance of supporting victims early to prevent cyclical patterns of harm is a key strategic aim in tackling violence and exploitation which includes children and young people in care.

19 Consultation and Engagement

19.1 As a matter of public law, the duty to consult with regards to proposals to vary, reduce or withdraw services will arise in four circumstances:

- where there is a statutory requirement in the relevant legislative framework
- where the practice has been to consult, or, where a policy document states the council will consult, then the council must comply with its own practice or policy.
- exceptionally, where the matter is so important that there is a legitimate expectation of consultation.
- Where consultation is required to complete an equalities impact assessment.

19.2 Regardless of whether the council has a duty to consult, if it chooses to consult, such consultation must be carried out fairly. In general, a consultation can only be considered as proper consultation if:

- comments are genuinely invited at the formative stage.

- the consultation documents include sufficient reasons for the proposal to allow those being consulted to be properly informed and to give an informed response.
- there is adequate time given to the consultees to consider the proposals.
- there is a mechanism for feeding back the comments and those comments are considered by the decision-maker / decision-making body when making a final decision.
- the degree of specificity with which, in fairness, the public authority should conduct its consultation exercise may be influenced by the identity of those whom it is consulting.
- where relevant and appropriate, the consultation is clear on the reasons why and extent to which alternatives and discarded options have been discarded. The more intrusive the decision, the more likely it is to attract a higher level of procedural fairness.

20 BACKGROUND PAPERS

21 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

21.1 To update the Safer Community Partnership Board regarding the progress made in relation to the Victim Care Hub and Restorative Justice projects.

21.2 For the SCPB to recognise progress made against the ambitions of the council in delivering support to victims of crime and in developing restorative justice approaches across the borough partnership.

22 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

22.1 Not relevant in relation to this report.

23 POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

23.1 To develop partnership-led and community informed local strategies to prevent and respond to violence, exploitation and offending which will inform monitoring fora and governance arrangements for this comprehensive group of services.

23.2 Family Services will coordinate stakeholder meetings to explore key priorities and undertake public consultation and member engagement activities to agree local strategic priorities and plans for coordinated delivery.